ON THE OCCASION OF INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY

A Statement from the Indian Peoples Council

05 May 2026

May First has passed.

We did not mark it with a statement. We did not gather in the streets with the confidence that comes from a movement in motion. We observed it, if at all, in the manner of people who commemorate what they have lost rather than celebrate what they are building. That silence was not an oversight. It was a symptom. And it deserves to be named honestly before anything else is said.

This statement is belated. So, in many ways, is the reckoning it attempts.

THE GROUND BENEATH OUR FEET

For decades, Kerala stood as the last proof that communist governance in India was not merely a historical memory that the organized working class could hold state power, deliver material change, and defend its mandate against the full force of capital, communalism, and Congress accommodation alike. That proof has now been significantly weakened. The electoral verdict in Kerala is not simply a loss for the CPI(M). It is the closing of an argument that the mainstream Indian Left has been winning by pointing to a single remaining example for thirty years. When you have one fortress and it falls, you cannot pretend the war is going well.

We must resist the temptation to explain this away through electoral arithmetic, vote-splitting, performance of individual leaders or even electoral tampering. Those explanations are not wrong but they are simply insufficient. The deeper question is why a movement with the organizational depth, the historical legitimacy, and the governing record of the Kerala Left was loosing ground even before elections and the answer to that question lives not in the ballot box but in the slow erosion of what the Left is, what it says, and who it speaks to.

THE DIAGNOSIS

The Indian working class has not disappeared. It has, in fact, expanded into gig work and contract labour, into the informal economy that official statistics politely undercount, into construction sites and delivery networks and domestic service that the organized union movement has largely failed to reach. The class is present. The movement that should represent it is fragmented, diminished, and in several important respects, ideologically disoriented.

The unions once the sinew connecting communist politics to working-class life are divided not by principled disagreement but by organizational loyalty to parties that themselves no longer agree on core principles. A worker in a textile unit in Surat, a migrant labourer from Bihar on a Mumbai construction site, a platform delivery worker

in Bengaluru these people share a material condition that is, by any rigorous analysis, a class condition. Yet training and co-oridination lacks, why, if not abdication of duty by the leadership?

The communist parties themselves have multiplied inversely in proportion to their influence, which is to say that as the movement weakened, it fractured and as it fractured, it weakened further. This is not coincidence. Fragmentation is what happens when shared ideology is replaced by shared organizational habit. When parties can no longer agree on what they are for, they survive by defending what they are; their acronym, their symbol, their electoral deposit. This is the organizational form of defeat pretending to be continuity.

But the deeper failure is ideological, and it must be stated plainly: *significant sections of the Indian Left have, over the past two decades, quietly replaced class analysis with a politics of liberal coalition*. The logic was understandable. The immediate enemy communal fascism required the broadest possible alliance. Survival demanded accommodation. And so, step by step, the language of class gave way to the language of social rights, of representation, of constitutional values. Individually, tactically, those were not wrong steps. But they are not a substitute for the organizing principle that asks, in every situation: who owns, who labours, and who benefits? When a communist party can no longer answer that question with precision and without embarrassment, it has ceased to be communist in any meaningful sense and become instead the left wing of liberalism, tolerated by centrist parties as a vote bank, absorbed into coalitions on terms set by others, and rendered incapable of independent political action precisely when independent political action is most necessary.

The Liberal forces did not co-opt the Left through force. The Left walked in because it had lost confidence in its own ideology.

WHAT IS ACTUALLY AT STAKE

The forces arrayed against the working class in India today are not confused about what they want. Capital is consolidated, coordinated, and politically connected at a level not seen since Independence. The project of communal nationalism serves capital not accidentally but structurally it provides the social fractures along which workers can be divided, the scapegoats that redirect economic grievance, and the authoritarian instruments that suppress organizing. Fascism and capital are not separate enemies. They are the same enemy in two faces, and they must be confronted as such.

Against this, the Indian Left presents: multiple parties who will not share a platform, unions who will not share a picket line, and a politics increasingly indistinguishable from that of the liberal and centerist parties that have presided over thirty years of liberalization and destruction on working class and creating conditions for fascism.

This is not a sustainable position. It is not even a position. It is a betrayal to the ideology.

THE OBLIGATION AHEAD

We are not the first communists to face a period of retreat and fragmentation. The

history of this movement is not a straight line it is full of defeats, reversals, periods of apparent collapse and sometimes followed by reconstitution on firmer ground. What distinguishes the recoveries from the final dissolutions is whether those who remain are willing to diagnose honestly and reorganize deliberately, or whether they choose comfort in ritual and the managed decline of repeating old slogans to shrinking audiences.

The task before us is not easy but instructive should we choose to pursue; It is to return to the ground.

A return to the working class as it actually exists not the idealized intellectual proletariat of perception, but the contract worker, the migrant, the informal sector labourer, the gig worker who has no union and no floor and no recourse. To organize them. Not as voters first but as class first.

Return of the union as an institution of class power, not a dues-collecting bureaucracy attached to a party apparatus. The union must be the school of proleratian consciousness and class struggle before it is anything else.

End the fratricidal competition between communist formations that serves only our opponents.

And above all: stop apologizing for being communist. The conditions that make communism necessary have not softened. They have intensified. A politics that is embarrassed by its own ideology will not persuade anyone and organize nothing.

Chairman's personal message:

To invoke one of my favourite poems from my childhood by Alfred Lord Tennyson, 'The Brook'.
The original line is "*For men may come and men may go,*
But I go on forever"

adapted to our use here:

"*Elections may come and go,*
Fascistic storms may come and go
Liberal vulgarization may come and go,

Labour will go on, forever."